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Work and Workers.

THE VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

In the summer of 1901, after the day schools had been closed for the long vacation, the church doors shut during the week, and all the children of the East Side of New York who were not large enough to work playing in the streets, it occurred to Rev. Robert Boville that the opportunity, the only opportunity for daily religious work for children, was at hand. As the colleges and universities were closed, it was possible to get fresh, enthusiastic college men and women for this new work. Accordingly, in July, 1901, five churches were opened, and five men from Union Theological Seminary, one from New York University, and a Swedish student from the Newton Theological Institution took charge of the work. Schools were opened in these different places, the necessary funds having been guaranteed by interested friends. The women missionaries connected with the respective churches helped.

The program for the seven weeks of the schools was simple. Beginning at 9:30 A. M., an hour was devoted to opening services, singing, and a Bible lesson; the second hour was employed in manual work and games. The Bible lessons were based on the lives of Bible heroes, and have so remained up to the present time. Over 1,000 children were registered, and the daily average attendance was close to 30 per cent. of that number. The happiness of the men in their work, the appreciation of the churches and pastors concerned, and the response of the children were all so delightful that the work immediately secured approval from all who came to know it, and it was apparent that a new door of ministry, through the use of college men in their vacations, had been opened to the children. The method of Bible-teaching, from the first, was objective and dramatic, and to the children of the neighborhood a daily school, so conducted, awakened no prejudice, such as a Sunday school might create.

The second year showed ten schools opened with men from Union, Crozer, Rochester, Brown, and Columbia, as teachers. The number of children registered was 2,711, with an average regular daily attendance of 900. And this year the expense was only about \$2,400. Up to this point the care and industrial oversight of the girls in the schools had been undertaken by the women missionaries at each church, many of them giving up well-earned vacations. In 1903, in consequence, the student

force was much enlarged, including sixteen young women from Barnard, Vassar, Smith, Wells, and Mount Holyoke, with eighteen men from Chicago, Columbia, Colgate, and Rochester Universities. This year seventeen schools were opened, with a registration of 4,000 children and a total cost of \$4,900. Bible study, nature-study, manual occupations, games, and music formed the program; and while through these the college men and women gave their best to the children, they freely confessed that what the children had given to them was invaluable. In July, 1904, sixteen vacation schools were opened and conducted until August 26. For the first time a three-days' model course was given to the men and women students before they entered upon their work. Emphasis was placed on Scripture, singing, science, and sewing. Representatives from Brown, Bucknell, Colgate, Chicago, and New York Universities, and from Barnard, Smith, Vassar, Oberlin, and Mount Holyoke Colleges, formed the teachers. The reports showed that 3,130 children had been registered, that 1,055 were in average daily attendance, and that \$4,600 was the cost.

This work was begun in connection with the Baptist organization, but in the summer of 1905 it was, under the Federation of Churches of New York, extended into every available church. Consequently, fifty men and women from twenty colleges and universities opened fourteen vacation schools in churches of seven evangelical bodies in Manhattan and Brooklyn, in which over 4,000 children were registered and over 1,000 were in daily attendance.

The program of work given in 1905, while holding in the main to the plan of the first year, was much elaborated. In the three services of the model school, held just before the opening of the vacation schools, and designed to illustrate for and train in all branches of the work the members of the staff, the various methods of presenting the Bible stories—by object talk, wall and floor maps, and dramatization by the children—were given in detail. New songs, seven of the great hymns of the faith, twelve patriotic and nature songs, and four work-songs were taught. Lessons in sewing, hammock-making, and basket-weaving were given. Thus the teachers were prepared for their peculiar work. For two hours each morning, five days in the week, the children had instruction; the first hour was given to the Bible, singing, and calisthenics; the second hour, to industrial work. Here the girls were taught all the needful stitches in sewing, while the boys learned hammock-making, basket- and mat-weaving, and cane-seating. Twice a week a part of the second hour was given to practical talks on "First Aid to the Injured" and "How to Keep Well."

The subjects discussed were: What to do in case of burns, cuts, and bruises, fainting and sunstroke, drowning the care of the body, cleanliness in the home, etc. Conferences of teachers were held every Monday afternoon, affording a close touch between the director, supervisors, and the staff, and helping to keep up the enthusiasm and efficiency.

THE fifth international convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions was held in Nashville, Tenn., February 28 to March 4. There were delegates of professors and students from 700 institutions of higher learning in both the United States and Canada, making a total in attendance of 3,346 men and women. One hundred and forty-four missionaries from 26 different mission lands, and 149 representatives of 95 different foreign missionary societies, were present, besides nearly 400 other representatives, including speakers, volunteers out of college, Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association secretaries. These, together with the hundreds of students who were in Nashville unregistered, brought the number in attendance to nearly 19,000. It was the largest assemblage of Christian young people ever gathered together. Under the splendid leadership of Mr. Mott, the convention, during the entire four days of session, held to a high seriousness and dignity. It opened with a quiet hour of prayer and heart-searching, and was followed in the later sessions by strong, inspiring talks from men filled with the spirit and enthusiasm for work in foreign lands. A noteworthy achievement of the convention was the easy raising of \$85,000, to carry on the work of the movement for the next four years.